crores to 581 units and disbursed Rs. 557.18 crores to 571 units under the Soft Loan Scheme.

Decline in export of iron ore through Paradip Port (Orissa)

*236. SHRI JAGADISH JANI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there had been a sharp decline in the export of iron ore through Paradip Port in Orissa during the first three years of the Sixth Plan period; and

(b) if so, what steps have been taken to increase the export of iron ore through Paradip Port?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SUPPLY (SHRI NIHAR RANJAN LASKAR): (a) and (b) There has been a decline in the export of iron ore through Paradip Port in Orissa during the first three years of the Sixth Plan period because of the following reasons:—

(1) Recessionary situation being faced by Steel Industry globally resulting in lower demand for iron ore.

(2) In adequate draught at the port to receive large sized vessels resulting in considerable freight demerit and consequent unwillingness of foreign buyers to nominate vessels for this port.

(3)Limitation of iron ore handling and loading facilities at Paradip Port.

(4) Sharp decline in lifting by Rumania of low grade iron ore which is supplied by Orissa Mining Corporation Ltd., from their Daitari Tomka mines located in Cuttack District.

The following steps are being implemented to increase the exports of iron ore through Paradip Port:—

(1) MMTC have been asked to explore new markets for export of iron ore to countries willing to nominate smaller vessels for Paradip Port. MMTC has been able to export about one million tonnes of iron ore through Paradip Port in 1983-84. In 1984-85 also, as a result of MMTC's efforts, South Korea is now likely to take about 5 lakh tonnes, German Democratic Republic 2 lakh tonnes and Japan 5 lakh tonnes, making their projected export for 1984-85 about 1.2 million tonnes.

(2) MMTC has agreed to compensate buyers for higher incidence of freight involved in lifting ore from Paradip by giving discounts in prices.

(3) The possibility and economic viability of two port loading, *i.e.* initial loading at Paradip and uptopping at Madras Port is being examined by MMTC.

(4) Iron Ore handling facilities at Paradip Port have been substantially improved recently at considerable cost.

(5) Night navigation has been introduced to handle vessels during night time.

(6) Government of Orissa in consultation with MMTC are examining the possibility of locating a transhipper-cum-dredger at Paradip Port to augment the loading capacity of the port and to find continuing solution to the problem of siltation.

Tax arrears of top 20 large Industrial houses

*237. SHRI KALYAN ROY:
SHRI M. KALYANA SUNDARAM:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total tax arrears from the top 20 large industrial houses registered under MRTP Act based on their assets between 1979 to 1983 have reached over Rs. 130 crores, as on 21st December, 1982;

(b) what are the names of these houses and the details of the outstanding amount against each of them;

(c) what are the reasons for not taking any stern action to recover the huge amount of arrears; and